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PRESS RELEASE

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) grants heavy agricultural equipment to Uzbek Farmers



The USAID-funded Water Users Associations Support Program (WUASP) handed over heavy agricultural equipment to a water users' association in Jondor Rayon, Bukhara Oblast in June 2008. "This equipment will ease high-value crop production, increase farmers' incomes, and improve rural people's living standards," said William Frej, Director of the Regional USAID Mission for Central Asian Republics during the festive handover ceremony. Jondor Rayon's Khokim Kholmurod Jumoboev other local government officials, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan, farmers and community members also participated in the ceremony.

The associations received six mini-tractors each equipped with concrete mixers, bulldozer blades, and trailers that be used to maintain, rehabilitate, and construct irrigation and drainage systems. The tractors also have harrow plows and cultivators that are needed to cultivate land for orchards and grape fields.

After the ceremony guests had an opportunity to talk to farmers and WUA staff, participated in ribbon cutting ceremony at newly built water distribution point in "Jondorlik Mirob" WUA and visited farm where had a chance to try non-organic products by water users. All participants expressed their gratitude to USAID for the assistance and their hopes for the effective cooperation in the future.

The USAID-funded WUASP assists Uzbek farmers to increase agricultural production through improved management of irrigation water systems since 2004. The program directly works with water users associations, whose primary function is to ensure fair and timely delivery of irrigation water, thus limiting conflicts between farmers. The associations also work to secure a more productive use of Central Asia's most valuable natural resource – water. WUASP supports 30 water users associations in four oblasts (which oblasts) with 70,000 hectares of land, benefiting nearly 250,000 people. New techniques and technologies, introduced by the program, have helped more than 2,100 farmers and their communities to substantially increase their economic well-being. The program is implemented by Holis Konsalt.